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Agenda item 82

Effects of atomic radiation

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Rapporteur: Mr. Shingo **Miyamoto** (Japan)

I. Introduction

1. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 11 September 2000, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 10th, 11th, 15th and 16th meetings, on 10, 12, 26 and 30 October 2000 (see A/C.4/55/SR.10, 12, 15 and 16).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation[1] with scientific annexes;

(b) Letter dated 12 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.4/55/5).

4. At the 10th meeting, on 10 October, the Chairman of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation made a statement and introduced the report of that Committee[1] (see A/C.4/55/SR.10).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.4/55/L.6 and Rev. 1

5. At the 10th meeting, on 10 October, the representative of Sweden, on behalf of Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica,

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 46* (A/55/46).

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the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Monaco, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay, subsequently joined by Bulgaria, France, India, Malta, the Philippines, the Russian Federation and Thailand, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" (A/C.4/55/L.6) which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 54/66 of 6 December 1999, in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

"*Taking note with appreciation* of the comprehensive report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation,

"*Reaffirming* the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

"*Concerned* about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

"*Noting* the views expressed by Member States at its fifty-fifth session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

"*Conscious* of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

"1. *Commends* the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past forty-five years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation, and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

"2. *Notes with satisfaction* the completion in 2000 of the thirteenth comprehensive report of the Scientific Committee, entitled *Sources and Effects of Ionizing Radiation: United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation — Report to the General Assembly, with Scientific Annexes*, thereby providing the scientific and world community its latest evaluations of the sources and effects of ionizing radiation on human beings and their environment;

"3. *Reaffirms* the decision to maintain the present functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee, including its present reporting arrangements;

"4. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources;

"5. *Endorses* the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly;

"6. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of ionizing radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session;

"7. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

"8. *Expresses its appreciation* for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

"9. *Welcomes*, in this context, the readiness of Member States to provide the Scientific Committee with relevant information on the effects of ionizing radiation in affected areas, and invites the Scientific Committee to analyse and give due consideration to such information, particularly in the light of its own findings;

"10. *Invites* Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly."

6. On 13 October, the Committee had before it the amendment (A/C.4/55/L.7/Rev.1) to draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.6, submitted by Belarus and Ukraine, by which:

(a) The words "*Taking note with appreciation* of the comprehensive report" would be replaced with the words "*Taking note* of the substantive report" in the second preambular paragraph;

(b) The fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs would be transposed;

(c) In operative paragraph 2, the words "*Notes with satisfaction* the completion in 2000 of the thirteenth comprehensive report" would be replaced with the words "*Notes* the release in 2000 of the thirteenth report";

(d) The words "and invites the Committee to submit its programme of work to the General Assembly on a regular basis" would be added at the end of operative paragraph 4;

(e) In operative paragraph 5, the words "and plans" after the word "intentions" would be deleted;

(f) A new operative paragraph would be inserted after operative paragraph 8, reading:

"*Recommends* the Scientific Committee to continue consultations with Member States concerned in the process of preparing its future reports".

7. At the 15th meeting, on 26 October, the representative of Sweden, on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.6, introduced a revised draft resolution (A/C.4/55/L.6/Rev.1).

8. At the same meeting, the representative of Belarus, on behalf also of Ukraine, withdrew the amendments to draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.6.

9. At its 16th meeting, on 30 October, the Committee adopted revised draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.6/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 11).

10. At the same meeting, the representatives of Belarus and Ukraine made statements (see A/C.4/55/SR.16).

III. Recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

11. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Effects of atomic radiation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 54/66 of 6 December 1999, in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and of the release of its extensive report,[2]

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

Noting the views expressed by Member States at its fifty-fifth session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

Conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

1. *Commends* the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past forty-five years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation, and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 46* (A/55/46).

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work of the Scientific Committee and of the release of its extensive report, entitled *Sources and Effects of Ionizing Radiation: United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation — Report to the General Assembly, with Scientific Annexes*,[3] which provides the scientific and world community with the Committee's latest evaluations of the sources and effects of ionizing radiation on human beings and their environment;

3. *Reaffirms* the decision to maintain the present functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee, including its present reporting arrangements;

4. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources, and invites the Scientific Committee to submit its programme of work to the General Assembly;

5. *Endorses* the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly;

6. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of ionizing radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

8. *Expresses its appreciation* for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

9. *Invites* the Scientific Committee to continue its consultations with scientists and experts from interested Member States in the process of preparing future scientific reports;

10. *Welcomes*, in this context, the readiness of Member States to provide the Scientific Committee with relevant information on the effects of ionizing radiation in affected areas, and invites the Scientific Committee to analyse and give due consideration to such information, particularly in the light of its own findings;

11. *Invites* Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly.

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[3] United Nations publication, Sales Nos. E.00.IX.3 and E.00.IX.4.